

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:  
  
receiving wagers from a player playing paid games on a first gaming device;  
  
detecting a bonus round initiation signal;  
  
enabling the player to play N bonus games, where N is greater than or equal to 1;  
  
determining a base award to the player based on a certain outcome of the bonus games played;  
  
multiplying the base award by a multiplier to obtain a multiplied award; and  
  
granting the multiplied award to the player.
2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the bonus round is a free game bonus round.
3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the first gaming device is one of a plurality of eligible gaming devices playing the bonus games, and wherein the other eligible gaming devices also receive a bonus round initiation signal.
4. The method of Claim 3 further comprising determining the multiplier based on a number of players playing the bonus games.
5. The method of Claim 4 wherein at least one multiplier is a fraction of the number of players playing the bonus games.
6. The method of Claim 4 wherein at least one multiplier equals the number of players.
7. The method of Claim 3 further comprising determining the multiplier based on a player's ranking after the bonus round.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein a multiplier is only applied to an award to a player that has won the bonus round.

9 The method of Claim 7 wherein a multiplier is applied to awards to multiple players based on the players' rankings.

10. The method of Claim 3 wherein the multiplier is a fixed multiplier.

11. The method of Claim 3 further comprising determining the multiplier based on a random selection.

12. The method of Claim 3 wherein determining a base award is based on a player's ranking at the end of the bonus round.

13. The method of Claim 12 wherein the player's ranking is based on total awards accumulated by the player during the bonus round.

14. The method of Claim 1 wherein the multiplier is a fixed multiplier.

15. The method of Claim 1 further comprising determining the multiplier based on a random selection.

16. The method of Claim 1 wherein determining a base award comprises determining a base award to the player based on displays of symbols across one or more paylines during the bonus games.

17. The method of Claim 1 wherein determining a base award comprises granting a jackpot, a portion of a jackpot, a fixed award, a progressive award, or a mystery award to the player.

18. A computing machine comprising:

a display for displaying paid games to a player; and

at least one processor for carrying out the following method:

detecting a bonus round initiation signal;

enabling the player to play N bonus games, where N is greater than or equal to 1;

determining a base award to the player based on a certain outcome of the bonus games played;

multiplying the base award by a multiplier to obtain a multiplied award;  
and

granting the multiplied award to the player.

19. The machine of Claim 18 wherein the machine is connected within a system of gaming machines, and wherein other eligible gaming machines within the system of gaming machines also receive a bonus round initiation signal.

20. The machine of Claim 19 wherein the processor is further programmed for determining the multiplier based on a number of players playing the bonus games.

21. The machine of Claim 19 wherein the processor is further programmed for determining the multiplier based on a player's ranking after the bonus round.

22. The machine of Claim 19 wherein the processor is further programmed for multiplying the base award to a player that has won the bonus round.

23. The machine of Claim 19 wherein the processor is further programmed for multiplying base awards to multiple players based on the players' rankings.

24. The machine of Claim 19 wherein the multiplier is a fixed multiplier.

25. The machine of Claim 19 wherein the processor is further programmed for determining the multiplier based on a random selection.

26. The machine of Claim 18 wherein the machine is a computing device dedicated to gaming.

27. The machine of Claim 18 wherein the machine further comprises an input for receiving a wager.